by seventeen years of war, and stressing the importance of a return to peace and stability for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Afghanistan, bearing in mind that the country continues to suffer from an extremely critical economic situation as a landlocked, least developed and war-stricken country,

Supporting the efforts of the United Nations Special Mission to Afghanistan headed by Mr. Norbert Holl to bring about the restoration of peace, normalcy and national reconciliation and the reconstruction and rehabilitation of war-stricken Afghanistan,

Deeply concerned about the problem of millions of anti-personnel landmines and unexploded ordnance in Afghanistan, which continue to prevent many Afghan refugees from returning to their villages and working in their fields, and disturbed by reports of new mines being laid,

Concerned for the well-being of the unarmed civilian population of Afghanistan, in particular of Kabul, who face a long winter possibly deprived of basic foods, fuel and medicine owing to a renewal of hostilities around the capital,

Bearing in mind the close interrelationship between ensuring peace and normalcy in Afghanistan and the ability of the country to take effective steps towards revitalizing the economy, and stressing that a cessation of armed hostilities between the warring parties in Afghanistan and political stability are indispensable if reconstruction measures are to have a lasting effect,

Affirming the urgent need to continue international action to assist Afghanistan in restoring basic services and the infrastructure of the country, and welcoming the efforts of the United Nations Development Programme and other United Nations agencies, associated bodies and other humanitarian organizations and agencies, including relevant non-governmental organizations, in this respect,

Expressing its appreciation for the assistance of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in its continuing support for the repatriation of Afghan refugees from neighbouring countries,

Reaffirming the principle of non-refoulement as contained in article 33 of the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees,[2]

Expressing its gratitude to all Governments that have rendered assistance to Afghan refugees, in particular the Governments of Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran, and recognizing the need for continuing international assistance for the maintenance abroad and the voluntary repatriation and resettlement of refugees and internally displaced persons,

Expressing its appreciation to the States, intergovernmental organizations and associated bodies of the United Nations, as well as to other humanitarian organizations and agencies, including relevant non-governmental organizations, that have responded positively and continue to respond to the humanitarian needs of Afghanistan, as well as to the Secretary-General for his efforts to draw the attention of the international community to the acute

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[2] United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 189, No. 2545.

problems of reconstruction in Afghanistan and for mobilizing and coordinating the delivery of appropriate humanitarian assistance,

1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General,[1] and endorses the observations and recommendations set out therein;

2. Requests the Secretary-General to authorize the United Nations Special Mission to Afghanistan, established under resolution 48/208, to continue its efforts to facilitate national reconciliation and reconstruction in Afghanistan;

3. Also requests the Secretary-General to continue efforts to develop plans for national reconstruction and rehabilitation beginning in areas of peace and security, on the basis of the recommendations set out in his report;

4. Calls upon the leaders of all Afghan parties to place the highest priority on national reconciliation, acknowledging the war-weariness of the Afghan people and their desire for rehabilitation, reconstruction and economic and social development;

5. Demands that all Afghan parties fulfil their obligations and honour their commitments regarding the safety and full freedom of movement of United Nations personnel and other international personnel, as well as the security of their premises in Afghanistan, and cooperate fully with the United Nations and associated bodies as well as with other humanitarian organizations and agencies in their efforts to respond to the humanitarian needs of the people of Afghanistan;

6. Calls upon all parties not to hamper the delivery of humanitarian assistance;

7. Expresses grave concern at the indiscriminate use of landmines in Afghanistan, which seriously impedes the delivery of humanitarian assistance;

8. Urgently appeals to all States, organizations and programmes of the United Nations system, specialized agencies and other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to continue to provide, on a priority basis and as far as conditions on the ground permit, all possible financial, technical and material assistance for the restoration of basic services and the reconstruction of Afghanistan and the voluntary, safe and secure return of refugees and internally displaced persons, with dignity and honour, and appeals to the international financial and development institutions to assist in the planning of the reconstruction of Afghanistan;

9. Calls upon the international community to respond to the inter-agency consolidated appeal for emergency humanitarian and rehabilitation assistance for Afghanistan launched by the Secretary-General for the period from 1 January to 31 December 1997, bearing in mind the availability also of the Afghanistan Emergency Trust Fund;

10. Denounces the discrimination against girls and women and other violations of human rights and international humanitarian law in Afghanistan, and notes with deep concern possible repercussions on international relief and reconstruction programmes in Afghanistan;

11. Requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session a report on the actions taken pursuant to the present resolution;

12. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-second session, under the cluster of items on coordination of humanitarian assistance, the item entitled "Emergency international assistance for peace, normalcy and reconstruction of war-stricken Afghanistan".

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The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 49/140 of 20 December 1994 and 50/88 B of 19 December 1995,

Recalling also Security Council resolution 1076 (1996) of 22 October 1996, the previous statements of the President of the Security Council on the situation in Afghanistan, including the statements of 15 February and 28 September 1996,[3] and the letter dated 22 August 1996 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General,[4]

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General of 26 November 1996[5] and of his letters dated 20 November 1996 addressed to the President of the General Assembly[6] and the President of the Security Council,[7]

Noting all recent declarations by participants of regional international meetings and by international organizations on the situation in Afghanistan, including the statement by the Organization of the Islamic Conference ministerial meeting of 2 October 1996, the joint declaration made on 4 October 1996 by the leaders of Kazakstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian

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[3] Official Records of the Security Council, Fifty-first Year, Resolutions and Decisions of the Security Council, 1996, documents S/PRST/1996/6 and S/PRST/1996/40, respectively.

[4] Ibid., Supplement for July, August and September 1996, document S/1996/683.

[5] A/51/698-S/1996/988; see Official Records of the Security Council, Fifty-first Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1996, document S/1996/988.

[6] A/51/689.

[7] Official Records of the Security Council, Fifty-first Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1996, document S/1996/966.

Federation, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan,[8] the statement issued on 28 October 1996 by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union[9] and the Tehran Declaration of 30 October 1996,[10]

Welcoming the initiative of the Secretary-General to convene the international meeting on Afghanistan on 18 November 1996 in New York and his intention to convene further meetings of the group from time to time,

Wishing the people of Afghanistan peace and prosperity,

Strongly committed to the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and national unity of Afghanistan,

Expressing concern at the continuation and recent intensification of the military confrontation in Afghanistan, which have caused civilian casualties and an increase in refugees and displaced persons, and which seriously endanger the stability and peaceful development of the region,

Deeply concerned about the discrimination against women and girls and other recurring abuses of human rights in Afghanistan, and emphasizing the importance of democracy and of the realization of human rights in any future political process in Afghanistan,

Deeply concerned also about the lack of progress in reaching an agreement on the establishment of an acceptable and broadly representative council and an immediate and durable ceasefire and urging all Afghan parties to resolve their differences through peaceful means and achieve national reconciliation through political dialogue,

Affirming the readiness of the United Nations to assist the people of Afghanistan in their effort to resolve internal political differences, facilitating national reconciliation leading to the restoration of a fully representative, broad-based transitional government of national unity and to the start of the process of rehabilitation and reconstruction in their country,

Convinced that the United Nations, as a universally recognized intermediary, must continue to play a central and impartial role in international efforts towards a peaceful resolution of the Afghan conflict,

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[8] A/51/470-S/1996/838, annex; see Official Records of the Security Council, Fifty-first Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1996, document S/1996/838.

[9] A/51/635-S/1996/894, annex; see Official Records of the Security Council, Fifty-first Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1996, document S/1996/894.

[10] A/51/634-S/1996/890; see Official Records of the Security Council, Fifty-first Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1996, document S/1996/890.

Expressing its support for the continuing efforts of the United Nations Special Mission to Afghanistan headed by Mr. Norbert Holl to bring about the restoration of peace, normalcy and national reconciliation, through a political process in which all segments of Afghan society are represented,

Expressing its appreciation for the efforts of the Organization of the Islamic Conference in support of the Special Mission and the engagement of that organization in Afghanistan, in coordination with the United Nations, with a view to achieving a just and lasting political settlement,

Stressing the need to prevent further civilian casualties,

Stressing also the importance of non-intervention and non-interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan,

Deeply concerned at the continued supply of weapons, military equipment and ammunition to the Afghan parties, which has further contributed to the deaths of innocent civilians and the destruction of cities, villages and homes and has encouraged the factions in their futile efforts to settle political differences by military means,

Expressing its mounting concern about actions undermining the security of State frontiers, including the growing illicit traffic in arms and narcotics by criminal elements and groups from certain areas of Afghanistan and about the use of Afghan territory for the training and harbouring of terrorists, which create a threat to peace and stability in the entire region, including Afghanistan,

Bearing in mind that Afghanistan, as a State party to the Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage[11] of 16 November 1972, has recognized its primary duty to ensure the identification, protection, conservation, presentation and transmission to future generations of, inter alia, the cultural heritage situated on its territory,

Bearing in mind also the close interrelationship between ensuring peace and normalcy in Afghanistan and the ability of the country to take effective steps towards revitalizing the economy, and stressing that a cessation of armed hostilities between the warring parties in Afghanistan and political stability are indispensable if reconstruction measures are to have a lasting effect,

1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General,[5] and endorses the observations and recommendations set out therein;

2. Stresses that the main responsibility for finding a political solution to the conflict lies with the Afghan parties;

3. Calls upon all Afghan parties to cease immediately all armed hostilities, to renounce the use of force, to put aside their differences and to engage in a political dialogue aimed at achieving national reconciliation and a lasting political settlement of the conflict and establishing a fully representative and broad-based transitional government of national unity;

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[11] United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 1037, No. 15511.

4. Supports the Secretary-General in his continuing efforts, undertaken in cooperation with the Afghan parties and with interested States and international organizations, in particular the Organization of the Islamic Conference, to promote the political process aimed at achieving national reconciliation in Afghanistan;

5. Reaffirms its full support for the efforts of the United Nations, in particular the activities of the United Nations Special Mission to Afghanistan, in facilitating, where appropriate in cooperation with interested States and international organizations, the political process towards the goals of national reconciliation and a lasting political settlement with the participation of all parties to the conflict and all segments of Afghan society;

6. Calls upon all Afghan parties to cooperate with the United Nations Special Mission, and encourages all interested States and international organizations to take all steps necessary, in close coordination with the United Nations Special Mission, to promote peace in Afghanistan, to support the United Nations efforts to this end and to use any influence they have to encourage the parties to cooperate fully with the United Nations Special Mission;

7. Demands that all Afghan parties fulfil their obligations and honour their commitments regarding the safety and full freedom of movement of United Nations personnel, in particular the personnel of the United Nations Special Mission, as well as the security of their premises in Afghanistan;

8. Requests the Secretary-General to authorize the United Nations Special Mission to Afghanistan, established under resolution 48/208, to continue its efforts to facilitate national reconciliation and reconstruction in Afghanistan, specifically to mediate an end to the conflict and to facilitate the implementation of a comprehensive peaceful settlement, to be agreed upon by the Afghan parties, which could include, inter alia, the following elements:

- An immediate and durable ceasefire among the Afghan parties, to be supervised by a commission composed of representatives of all the warring parties, facilitated by the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference;

- The demilitarization of Kabul, with adequate safeguards to ensure security and public order;

- The establishment of a broad-based and fully representative authoritative council, with authority, inter alia:

  To create and control a national security force to provide for security throughout the country and oversee the demobilization of all the warring parties through the collection and safeguarding of all heavy weapons in the country, and to stop the flow of arms and of equipment related to arms production to the parties;

  To form a fully representative and broad-based transitional government which would, inter alia, control the national security force and create conditions for free and fair

elections leading to a representative national government, possibly utilizing traditional decision-making structures, such as a grand assembly, to help to establish those conditions throughout the country;

9. Expresses its support for the proposal by the Secretary-General to further strengthen the United Nations Special Mission by increasing the number of its military advisers from the current two to five and also by assigning to it two civilian police advisers;

10. Reiterates its call upon all Afghans, especially the leaders of warring parties, to cooperate fully with the broad-based authoritative council, priority being given to the implementation of the steps referred to in paragraph 8 above;

11. Deplores the civilian casualties inflicted by the indiscriminate use of landmines, and calls upon all Afghan parties to desist from such use;

12. Denounces the discrimination against girls and women and other violations of human rights in Afghanistan, and calls upon all Afghan parties to respect the human rights of every individual, regardless of gender, ethnicity or religion;

13. Denounces also violations of international humanitarian law in Afghanistan, and urgently calls upon all parties strictly to respect all its provisions;

14. Calls upon all Afghan parties to take appropriate steps to prohibit, prevent and, if necessary, put a stop to any form of theft, pillage or misappropriation of and any acts of vandalism directed against, cultural property of the Afghan nation;

15. Calls upon all States strictly to refrain from any outside interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan, including the involvement of foreign military personnel, to respect the right of the Afghan people to determine their own destiny and to respect the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and national unity of Afghanistan;

16. Also calls upon all States immediately to end the supply of arms, ammunition, military equipment, training or any other military support to all parties to the conflict in Afghanistan;

17. Reiterates that the continuation of the conflict in Afghanistan provides a fertile ground for terrorism and drug-trafficking which destabilize the region and beyond, and calls upon the leaders of the Afghan parties to halt such activities;

18. Supports the intention of the Secretary-General to move the headquarters of the United Nations Special Mission to Kabul when conditions permit;

19. Requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly every three months during its fifty-first session on the progress of the United Nations Special Mission and to report to the Assembly at its fifty-second session on the progress made in the implementation of the present resolution;

20. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-second session the item entitled "The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security".

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